(c) the reasons for not making coal available to the power plants which is the most crucial for power generation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Demand for coal for meeting the requirement of industries and generation of power as proposed in the draft report of the Working Group on Coal and Lignite for the IXth Five Year Plan is 439.70 million tonnes excluding 11.20 m. tes. of washery middlings. As against this, total indigenous coal production has been projected at 346.56 million tonnes.

The Government have, subject to legislative changes, decided to offer new coal blocks, without the restriction on coal mining for captive consumption only, to the Indian Companies on the basis of competitive bidding. The successful bidder will be free to sell coal in the open market and will be allowed to charge any price negotiated between him and the consumers.

(c) The total despatches of coal which was 187.86 million tonnes in the year 1995-96 is expected to be 201.4 m.t. in 1996-97 an increase of 7.2% Commensurate with increase in coal despatches, the power generation performance of coal based thermal power stations during the period April, 1996 — February, 1997 has also increased by 6% over the corresponding period of last year.

Joint venture in mining projects

2278. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Coal India Limited has planned to invite foreign companies to form joint ventures in mining projects and mechanised mining;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating CIL's coal production capacity in million tonnes till date as compared to last year as well as borrowing from the Centre during this period; and

(c) the steps CIL have taken so far to reduce ash content percentage in coal, improvement in production and productivity of coal with latest technology?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) As per information received from Coal India Limited (CIL) the production of raw coal by CIL upto February, 1997 has been 222.42 (provisional) million tonnes as compared to 209.27 million tormes during the same period of last year of 1995-96. The total production of raw coal of HL during the entire period of 1995-96 was 237.28 million tonnes.

The company has not borrowed any amount f*orn* the Centre during the current financial year of 1996-97 till date. However, CIL's borrowings from the Centre during 1995-96 was Rs. 288.72 crores.

(c) In order to reduce ash content percentage in coal, modernisation of existing washeries of CIL and construction of new washeries by the Company both for coking and non-coking coal are in progress.

For increasing coal production and productivity the following steps have been taken by CIL:—

(i) Opening of new mines and increasing efficiency;

(ii) Improving equipment utilisation in opencast mines;

(iii) Phasing out uneconomic mines where potential for improvement does not exist;

(iv) Reorientation in investment programme with a higher thrust on short gestation and higher capital output ratio projects to open up gainful re-deployment oppertunities to redundant employees of the closed mines and also to unutilised/ under—utilised workforce engaged elsewhere;

(v) Mechanisation of underground mines by introducing mechanical loadig at the coal pit and transportation of coal by conveyors, being taken up in a large way in several mines.

(v) Invitation of global bids for optimisation of coal production in seven underground mines of South Eastern Coalfields Limited by introduction of modern technologies on gain/risk sharing basis.

Lathi charged on workers of Singareni collieries in Adilabad, Andhra Pradesh

2279. SHRI K. M. SAIFULLAH: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether CISF Jawans lathi charged the workers in Mandamarri division of Singareni Collieries in Adilabad district in Andhra Pradesh on Sunday, the 9th February, 1997;

(b) the reasons for the clash leading to lathi charge;

(c) the number of workers injured; and

(d) the action taken against those involved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In the third shift of 9.2.97 two CISF constables on duty found a workman stealing a safari clamp. During the chase, the culprit escaped and another worker not connected with the incident was caught and beaten up by CISF constables. The workmen gathered and beat up one of the constables while the other one escaped. On receiving the information that one of the constables was missing, the Inspector, CISF Unit reached the spot and lathi charged the workmen under the impression that the constable was kidnapped by the workmen.

(c) Eleven workers were injured.

(d) The Inspector and the CISF constable have been placed under suspension as disciplinary proceedings gainst them is contemplated.

बिहार के हजारीबाग जिले में लपंगा कोलियरी में आग

2280. **श्री ज्ञान रंजन :** क्या कोयला मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या बिहार के हजारीबाग जिले में लंपगा कोलियरी में पिछले 5 माह से आग लगी हुई है;

(ख) क्या उक्त कोयला खान में 500 कर्मकार कार्यरत है;

(ग) क्या वहां अभी तक कोई मशीन नहीं लगाई गई है;

(घ) यदि उपर्युक्त भागों के उत्तर सकारात्मक है तो वहां मशीनें न लगाये जाने हेतु जिम्मेदार अधिकारियोम के नाम क्या है; और

(ड) क्या सरकार उनके विरूद्व कोई कार्रवाई करने का विचार रखती है; यदि हां, तो कब तक और यदि नहीं तो इसके क्या कारण है?

कोयला मंत्रालय की राज्य मंत्री (श्रीमती कान्ति सिंह): (क) कोल इंडिया लि0 (को0इ0लि0) द्वारा प्रस्तुत की गई सूचना के अनुसार, बिहार के हजारीबाग जिले में लपंगा कोलियरी में कोई आग विद्यमान नहीं है।

(ख) लंपगा कोलियरी में 581 कामगार कार्यरत है।

(ग) लपंगा कोलियरी में पारम्परित खनन मशीनरी स्थापित की गई है तथा वहां सामान्य रूप से उत्पादन चल रहा है।

(घ) और (ड) प्रश्न ही नहीं उठता है।

Opening Coal Sector for privatisation

2281. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to open coal sector for privatisation if so, the number of proposals received indicating the locations thereof;

(b) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news item captioned "Deregulation may lead to hike in coal price" which appeared in the Hindustan